
How Can I Get Involved?

Learn more!

Visit the Sero Project or the Positive Justice Project websites for more information about HIV Criminalization in the United States.

www.seroproject.com

<http://www.hivlawandpolicy.org/>

Join the Coalition!

Go to moaidstaskforce.com to join the task force and learn how you can change Missouri's laws!

Facebook and Twitter

Follow The Missouri AIDS Task Force (@MOAIDSTaskForce) or any of our partners to keep updated.

For more information contact:

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All Other Areas: Gretchen
(314)535-1919 x3049 or
gwaddell@doorwayshousing.org

The Missouri Anti-Criminalization Task Force is a coalition of advocacy groups, AIDS service organizations and citizen activists fighting to reduce stigma and discrimination against people living with HIV/AIDS.



Missouri Anti-Criminalization Task Force Partners:

- The Campaign to End AIDS
- The Center for HIV Law & Policy
- GRACE of Greater Kansas City
- Kansas City CARE Clinic
- Lambda Legal
- Missouri AIDS Task Force
- Positive Advocacy Caucus, Kansas City
- PROMO
- Sero Project
- St. Louis Effort for AIDS
- The Positive Justice Project
- The Positive Women's Network of the United States of America

HIV Criminalization

An Epidemic of Stigma
Driving HIV Transmission



Information prepared and distributed by the Missouri Anti-Criminalization Task Force, a coalition sponsored by The Missouri AIDS Task Force.

What is HIV Criminalization?

HIV Criminalization is when a person living with HIV (PLWH) is prosecuted for not being able to prove they disclosed their HIV status prior to having consensual sexual contact **OR** when a person living with HIV faces heightened charges or punishments simply because they have HIV.

What is Missouri's Law?

Risking Infection of HIV (RSMo 191.677)

According to Missouri's law, a PLWH is "risking infection" of HIV if they engage in sexual activity, donate organs or blood, share needles or bite.

This is a Class B Felony if the PLWH cannot prove they disclosed their status.

The use of condoms is not a defense.

The facts and statistics stated in this brochure originated from the following sources:

- The Center for Disease Control
- The National HIV/ AIDS Strategy
- AIDS United
- The Kaiser Family Foundation
- The Sero Project

Ignoring Research

- HIV transmission can be prevented with: testing, medication and condom use.
- Research from the CDC states saliva, fecal matter and urine do not transmit HIV. Missouri's law ignores this and punishes PLWH for biting.
- The CDC states the probability of transmitting HIV from one act of sex is less than 1%. They also state this small risk can be reduced by an additional 96% when a PLWH has their HIV under control (also known as being "undetectable").
- The majority of PLWH try to protect their partners. The CDC states that people who do not know their HIV status are 3.5 times more likely to pass HIV to their partner.

Proven HIV prevention techniques are ignored in Missouri's law.

Fear, Stigma and Discrimination

- A survey in 2011 found less than 25% of Americans surveyed would be very comfortable living with someone who has HIV. PLWH face stigma, fear and ignorance about HIV every day.
- The punishment for risking HIV infection is disproportionate to the risk involved. A Class B Felony results in 5-15 years in prison and a Class A Felony is 10-30 years, or life in prison. A minimum of 5 years in prison for actions that do not transmit HIV.
- Missouri's law reinforces wrong information about HIV. Education, not criminalization, is needed!

Take the Test, Risk Arrest

- Missouri's law is in direct opposition to public health messages about preventing STIs: Get tested and wear condoms.
- Some people at risk for HIV hear the message: Take the test, risk arrest. Many would rather not know their status than facing the stigma or HIV or going to prison.
- In the Sero Project survey, one in four PLWH surveyed knew someone who refuses HIV testing for fear of prosecution. The Kaiser Family Foundation found that 5% of people who had never been tested cited "fear of a positive test" as their reason.

Testing and knowing your status is the best way to prevent the spread of HIV.

Criminalization makes the HIV epidemic worse.